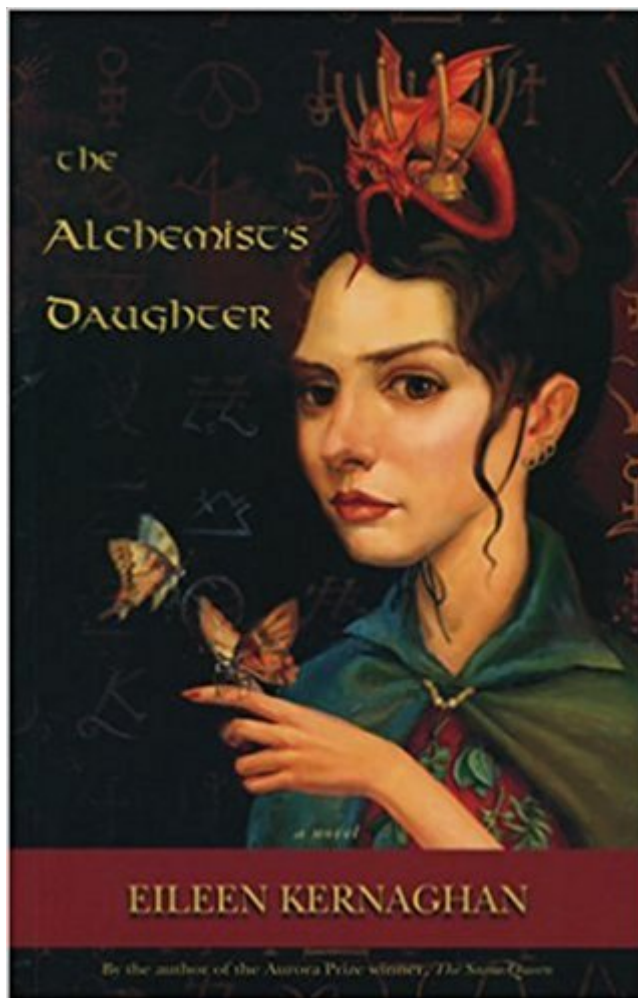


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The Alchemist's Daughter



Synopsis

The Alchemist's Daughter will pull you from whatever you are supposed to be doing into Sidonia's fortunes, and hold you there cover to cover. Marked by high adventure, and delicious language, Kernaghan's use of real historical figures like Dr. John Dee, Lady Mary Herbert, Sir Philip Sidney and William Shakespeare, blended with original fictional characters are a powerful mix, while her impeccable research allows you to learn something of an age that has long held a spell over contemporary readers.

Book Information

Paperback: 144 pages

Publisher: ThistleDown Press; 1 edition (October 25, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1894345797

ISBN-13: 978-1894345798

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.5 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 4 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,294,445 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #45 in Books > Teens > Historical Fiction > Renaissance #67 in Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > Renaissance #15691 in Books > Teens > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Fantasy

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

"(Eileen Kernaghan's) characters live in the richly detailed Elizabethan world of astrology, fortune-telling, beggars, tricksters, poets, lunatics and lovers." -- Victoria Times Colonist, December 12, 2004"... vivid descriptions of the haunting beauty of Glastonbury and exotic splendors of Twelfth Night revels at Greenwich palace..." -- SFRevu, October 2004"Eileen Kernaghan... has created characters who are very real, yet slightly whimsical, in a setting that feels historically accurate." -- The SF Site, December 17, 2004"This brief and witty historical novel, with overtones of fantasy, is both intellectual and entertaining." -- Endicott Studio Featured Young Adult Novels 2004-5

"Wild Talent: a novel of the supernatural" is Kernaghan's eighth book in the historical fantasy genre.

"The Snow Queen" ((ThistleDown, 2001)) won the Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy Award, the Aurora, for best speculative novel in English, and "The Alchemist's Daughter" ((ThistleDown 2004)) was shortlisted for the Sheila Egoff Prize for Children's Literature. EILEEN KERNAGHAN lives in New Westminster, British Columbia. R.P. MacIntyre's writing has garnered the 2005 Centennial Medal for his con

Sidonie Quince, a bright, pragmatic, and humorously sharp-tongued girl in Elizabethan England, prefers the "reassuring certainties" of Euclid and mathematics to the misty world of alchemy and fortune telling. Yet she has inherited the talent of scrying (crystal gazing) from her late mother. For good reason, Sidonie views the gift as a curse rather than a blessing even though her alchemist father Simon wants her to use her skills to earn money for the family and win favor at court. Simon has spent a lifetime laboring in his laboratory in search of the philosopher's stone and believes he is close to success in the Great Work. Rashly, he promises the Queen he will soon be able to turn lead into the gold the nation desperately requires to prepare for the looming threat of attack by the Spanish Armada. Though Sidonie fears he will fail again, incurring the Queen's displeasure, she sets off on a mission with her good friend Kit to locate a missing ingredient for the alchemical recipe. In the process, she finds herself in a whirlwind of danger in which her life and the fate of the nation hinge on her ability to see the future. In this richly detailed novel, we're handed a mysterious elixir created with a brightly written mix of Renaissance events, historic personages (including Queen Elizabeth, Lord Burleigh, Sir Philip Sidney, Francis Walsingham, William Shakespeare) and real and fictional intrigues well seasoned with magic. Eileen Kernaghan, who received the Aurora Prize for "The Snow Queen," once again works her own brand of alchemy to transform vowels and consonants into a reading experience of pure gold.

THE ALCHEMIST'S DAUGHTER - A REVIEW The striking cover of this young adult fantasy novel raises expectations about what's inside, and the content doesn't disappoint. True to form, Eileen Kernaghan's tale about an educated young Elizabethan woman caught up in a tide of court intrigue and political events is full of adventure and vivid detail. When alchemist Simon Quince convinces the charismatic Queen Elizabeth I that he has the much-sought formula for making gold almost in hand, his dismayed daughter Sidonie journeys to historic Glastonbury in search of a substance which may help him realize his goal. Sidonie has earned the favour of the Queen through her talent for scrying; a means of seeing the future in a crystal. The Queen's interest and Simon Quince's rash claim make the trip a treacherous one for Sidonie and her companion, Kit. The two encounter a number of

enemies and pitfalls during their quest, as well as happening upon the assistance and generosity of the powerful Lady Mary Herbert. Lady Mary's informed influence and closely guarded spiritual practices are a source of revelation to Sidonie, and help her resolve her father's dilemma. Drawn into yet a darker intrigue through her talents and her association with the Queen, Sidonie ultimately helps defeat an enemy of England and the Crown. The extensive detail of the lives of everyday Elizabethans and nobility alike lends solid authenticity to both setting and plot, as does the careful crafting and inclusion of historic information and personalities pertinent to the time. The lush descriptions of the Royal Court and of Lady Mary's ancestral home deserve particular mention. This is an exciting novel for readers of any age, and Elizabethan enthusiasts especially should delight in the abundant detail and sumptuous settings found throughout the book.

Decades have past since I was a young adult and yet I found "The Alchemist's Daughter" just as suitable for an 'old' adult. I read it in one sitting, revelling in the details of Elizabethan England and the world of alchemy. Kernaghan has captured the lively, bustling era with the spoken word of the times and descriptions that catapult the reader into London, Glastonbury, an aristocratic country house, and the royal court. Her research is impeccable; she carries the plot along at a good pace; and includes all the elements that are essential for a page turner. Don't miss this latest book by Eileen Kernaghan.

My title says it all, really. I read this book when it first came out and very much enjoyed the detail and sensibility. The young woman protagonist stays in the mind as do her adventures--reluctant as they are!--made necessary by the dangerous mess her alchemist father has gotten himself into.

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